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\*                   HER CHOICE                   \*  
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By George Elmer Cobb.  
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The worst sores of life are caused by crumpled rose leaves instead of thorns. So at least realized Jasper Warren.

He was pacing a glorious stretch of woodland along the hill overlooking Reedville, but he had no care for the



"What Is It You Want?"

beauties of nature nor his indirect environment for the time being.

"I won't complain nor give up all my ambition in life," he said bravely, "but," with a sigh, "I may as well give up Irene Barton as a very distant star, unattainable so far as I am concerned. I had hopes when I first came into the field, but now—two rivals! And they seem to be able to engage Irene's attentions to my entire exclusion."

Jasper Warren really and devotedly

loved the fair girl he had named. So did his rivals, it appeared. They had the advantage of him in one respect. They were scions of wealthy families, their positions in society were assured.

In one respect, however, Warren felt himself their superior. Val Winters and Boyd Girton, graduated from the same college as himself, had applied themselves to little except spending their money. They had no particular motive or ambition in life and let things drift as they listed.

"I'm waiting for opportunity to come along," Winters fancied it clever to say to his friends.

"Then we will escort the fair goddess to the temple of fame in company," chimed in Girton, not a bad fellow by any means, but just at that age when money spoils the weak man.

One day, an eventful one for Jasper Warren, a circumstance occurred which brought out in bold relief the characteristics of the three young men, and in the future something more. They were walking down the street together, when a half frozen, starved-faced slip of a girl approached them.

"Will you give me a trifle," she said, not all in the whine of a professional beggar, but as if driven by desperation to hopeless solicitation for alms, which, it looked, had produced few results.

Winters drew out his purse. It was filled with banknotes.

"No change," he said indifferently. "Apply to the relief committee."

"Here," spoke Girton, tendering four pennies, the return from a nickel just given to a newsboy. "Come on, Warren."

But Jasper lingered behind. He earnestly scanned the chit of a girl shivering regarding the few pennies in her cold, shrunken palm. He asked her a few questions. Her answers, bluntly, cheerlessly given, convinced Warren that here was a case indeed worthy of sympathy and succour.